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ABSTRACT

A survey was sent to the 100 largest women's studies programs in the United States in the spring of 1989. The goal of the survey was to accumulate information about the status of assistant/associate directors of women's studies programs in the United States that might be helpful to directors thinking about adding one of these positions to their programs. The growth of women's studies programs over the last 20 years has been impressive but somewhat uneven. While there were 276 programs in 1977, there are now over 525. This expansion has created programs with minors, majors, graduate programs, and research centers. Some of the programs also take on roles in providing programming, counseling, and information resources for women. The increasing responsibilities have not always been met with adequate funding for staff. While there has been general agreement as to the need for a tenured status for program directors, the positions of associate or assistant directors have proved to be less uniform and more vulnerable. Forty returns were received, and of these, 17 had a position within their program equivalent to assistant or associate director of women's studies. The survey instrument and a short summary of the findings are included in this document. (JB)

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Results of the NWSA Survey

On the Status of Assistant/Associate Directors of Women's Studies Programs in the U.S.

(W.S. Director Responses April - June, 1989)

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Results of the NWSA Survey

On the Status of
Assistant/Associate Directors of Women's Studies Programs
in the U.S.
(W.S. Director Responses April - June, 1989)

This survey was sent out to the 100 largest women's studies programs in the U.S. in the spring of 1989. The goal of the survey was to accumulate information about the status of assistant/associate directors of women's studies programs in the U.S. that might be helpful to directors thinking about adding one of these positions to their programs or upgrading positions currently held.

The growth of Women's Studies programs over the last twenty years has been impressive but somewhat uneven. While there were 276 programs in 1977 there are now over 525. This expansion has created programs with minors, majors, graduate programs, and research centers. Some of the programs also take on roles in providing programming, counseling, and information resources for women.

The increasing responsibilities have not always been met with adequate funding for staff. Generally, new support staff are hired as part-time workers, on soft money or temporary university funding. Eventually some of these positions are made full time through a patchwork of funding sources, resulting in positions with relatively little stability from year to year.

While there has been general agreement as to the need for a tenured status for program directors, the positions of associate or assistant director have proved to be less uniform and more vunerable. Thus, one of my goals with this survey was to begin the conversation about how we can increase the number of these positions and still insure that these new members receive access to adequate institutional benefits, status, and mobility.

Forty returns were received. Of these seventeen had a position within their program titled associate or assistant director of women's studies or with another title but with similar responsibilities and status. Of these seventeen programs fourteen were public institutions (all were large comprehensive universities) and three were private.

1. The average salary level for this position (full-time) is between $20,000 and $25,000.

2. Those surveyed feel that this salary level is comparable to similar positions within their universities.

3. Most of the positions are funded with permanent university funding.

4. A Ph.D is required or preferred for this position in all cases.

5. Skills required include student counseling, grantwriting, program administration, editing a newsletter or other publication, and almost half require teaching.

6. Only three of the seven programs which required teaching provided an academic home or a tenure-track line for this position.

7. All but one of the programs requiring teaching state that they have provided no job security for this position.

8. The administrative responsibilities for this position are either never evaluated or evaluated by the director alone in 75% of the the programs.

9. The teaching duties, though required, are evaluated by only one of the 7 programs.

10. Though eight of the programs expect the person holding this position to carry on her research while in the position only two assess it as part of the evaluation process and only three allow her any time off to pursue the research.

11. In only half of the programs does the person holding this position have access to the same or similar research funds as full-time faculty.

12.Eight have access to the same amount of travel funds as do full-time faculty.

13. Plans for upgrading the position include:
a. changing the title from assistant director to associate director;
b. adding an associate director for research;
c. regularizing the line with full benefits and job security;
d. making it a full-time position with faculty status
e. making it full-time

14. The barriers to these plans include:
a. Lack of upper administrative support;
b. lack of money;

15. Most program directors stated that the next likely position for a person in this position would be as a faculty member or a women's studies director.

16. Program directors felt that the person in this position was critical because she/he: (these are not cited in any particular order)
a. allowed the program to expand it responsibilties;
b. brought in a research dimension;
c. teaches important courses;
d. makes the running of the program possible;
e. alleviates the burden on the director;
f. acts as the director in the summer;
g. advises students;
h. represents the program off campus;
i. writing grants for our own programming
j. providing the continuity for the program as the directors change positions frequently;

17. Program directors reported that the problems inherent in this position include:
a. too much work for one person;
b. too little pay;
c. lack of status;
d. little security;
e. overlapping responsibilities with secretarial and director.

I wish to thank those directors who responded to the survey. I hope that this information will be useful to you and others. For more information contact Dr. Pat Carter, Women's Studies, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT. 06269-1181 or (203) 468-2186.

NWSA SURVEY-DIRECTOR'S RESPONSE

Please circle the most appropriate aswer and where indicated provide a written explanation. If you need more room for your responses please attach an additional sheet of paper. (Please label these with their corresponding item number.) Thank you.

1. Does your program currently have a position titled assistant or associate director of women's studies?
a. assistant
b. associate

2. Do you have a staff person whose duties would be parallel to that of an assistant or associate director of women's studies? (e.g. coordinator of programming, coordinator of research, assistant program administrator, etc.) If so what is the title of that position? Please state here:

** Please note: If you have more than one person on your staff with one of these titles please fill out an additional form for each individual. One additional form has been enclosed for your convenience.)

3. How long have you had a staff person in one of these positions?
a. less than one year
b. 1-3 years
c. 3-6 years
d. 6-10 years
e. over 10 years

4. Who originally defined this position in terms of role responsibilities?
a. a committee of women's studies faculty
b. By the director of women's studies alone
c. By the director in consultation with the w.s. faculty
d. By an university administrative or personnel unit
e. Other, please explain.

5. Who was on the search committee for this position?
a. women's studies faculty
b. w.s. faculty and the w.s. director
c. director decided on the hiring alone
d. w.s faculty and faculty from another academic discipline in which the person is also housed
e. other, please explain.

6. Is this position considered full or part time?
a. fulltime (40 hrs. a week)
b. part time (less than 40 hours a week)

7. Is this position a 12 month or an academic year appointment?
a. 12 months
b. 11 months
c. 10 months
d. 9 months
e. other, please explain.

8. Is this position considered primarily either an administrative or a faculty line?
a. administrative
b. faculty
c. both roles are required

9. Is this position entitled to the same health benefits as all full-time employees?
a. yes
b. no
c. the person in the position must pay out-of-pocket for some of the benefits

10. What other benefits does this position carry? (e.g. tuition remission for self, spouse, family? family health benefits? etc.) Please explain.

11. What is the salary level for this position?

12. Would you say that the salary for this position is comparable with similar positions within the university?
a. comparable
b. less than similar positions
c. more than similar positions
d. other, please explain

13. How is the position funded?
a. permanent university funds
b. 50% or more university funding and 50% or less soft money
c. 50% or more soft money and 50% or less university funding
d. other, please explain.

14. Would you say that the funding for this position is relatively stable?
a. yes
b. no

15. What was the educational background required of the person hired for this position?
a. Ph.D or terminal degree
b. masters degree, Ph.D preferred
c. masters degree
d. bachelor degree
e. other, please explain.

16. What skills were expected of the person hired for this position?
a. student counseling
b. grant writing
c. teaching
d. program administration
e. editor of a newsletter, journal or other publication
f. other, please explain. (Note: Please attach a copy of the job description if possible.)

17. What was the expectation as to the teaching background of the person hired for this position?
a. has taught specific women's studies courses at an institution of higher education
b. has taught any courses in women's studies at an institution of higher education
c. has taught courses in the discipline of their terminal degree
d. no teaching background required
e. other, please explain

18. Was the person hired for this position expected to have a departmental affiliation outside women's studies?
a. yes
b. no
c. other, please explain

19. If yes, is the position on a tenure track in that department?
a. yes
b. no
c. other, please explain

****If the answer to question 19 is no please skip to question 22.

20. If yes, will s/he be allowed to leave women's studies and move exclusively into the tenure track line at some time in the future?
a. yes
b. no
c. other, please explain.

21. Who will make the tenure decision for this appointment?
a. the department alone
b. the department in consultation with the director of women's studies
c. a committee of members from both the department and the women's studies faculty
d. other, please explain

22. Are the requirements for tenure, promotion, retention of the tenure track line similar or different from other faculty in the department?
a. similar
b. different, if so, please explain how and why?

23. Does s/he have a tenure track line in women's studies?
a. yes
b. no
c. other, please explain

****If the answer to question 23 is no please skip to question 27.

24. If yes, will s/he be allowed to leave the administrative responsibilities of women's studies and move into their teaching line exclusively at some time in the future?
a. yes
b. no
c. other, please explain

25. Who will make the tenure decision for this appointment?
a. a committee of women's studies faculty across the disciplines
b. a committee of women's studies faculty from the same discipline or similar discipline
c. a committee of members of both the women's studies faculty and faculty from the department in which the person holds a terminal degree
d. other, please explain

26. Are the requirements for tenure, promotion, retention of the tenure track line similar or different from other faculty in the department?
a. similar
b. different, if different, please explain how and why?

27. If this position is not on a tenure track, does it have any provisions for job security? Please explain.

28. How often and by whom is the position evaluated? Please explain.

29. By what criteria is the position evaluated? Please explain.

30. Is s/he expected to teach while in this position?
a. yes
b. no
c. other, please explain.

31. If yes, for whom and how often?

32. Who decides what s/he teaches?

33. If possible, please list the courses s/he person teaches in one year.

34. Is her/his teaching assessed as a part of the evaluation? If so, how?

35. Is s/he expected to carry on her/his research while in this position?

36. Is her/his research assessed as a part of the evaluation process? If so, how?

37. Is s/he expected to publish while in the position?

38. If so, is it a part of the evaluation? How is it assessed?

39. Does s/he have the opportunity for time off to work on personal research and publication?
a. yes
b. no

40. If yes, how often, and under what conditions? (e.g. with pay, without pay; only as part of their regular vacation time, etc.)

41. Does s/he have access to the same or similar research funds as do other full-time faculty?
a. yes
b. no; if no, please explain how it differs.

42. Does s/he have access to the same or similar travel funds as do other full-time faculty?
a. yes
b. no; if no, please explain how it differs?

43. Do you have any plans for upgrading the position? If so how?

44. Are there barriers to these plans? If so, what are they?

45. How many years do you think a person should stay in this type of position, and why?

46. What do you think would be the likely next job for a person in this position?

47. Do positions parallel to this one exist in other programs within your university?
a. yes; if yes, please indicate these titles
b. no

48. What would you say are the primary assets in women's studies having this position?

49. What are the problems connected with the position?

50. Has the way that this position was initially conceptualized changed? If so, how? Do you consider these changes positive? Why or why not?

Thank you for your time in answering these questions. If you would like a summary of the results of this survey please include your name and address on a separate sheet. Please return by March 1, 1989.

Please Return to:

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